



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### Virginia Employment Commission

Ellen Marie Hess  
Commissioner

6606 West Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23230

Post Office Box 26441  
Richmond, Virginia 23261-6441

For Release: April 17, 2020

Contact: Conrad Buckler, Senior Economist  
Economic Information & Analytics Division  
(804) 486-2524 or (804) 486-2473

Follow us on Twitter, <http://twitter.com/VirginiaLMI>.

### **Virginia's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate Increased 0.7 Percentage Point in March to 3.3 Percent**

**— Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment fell by 28,600 jobs  
between February 2020 and March 2020—**

**RICHMOND**— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased 0.7 percentage point in March to 3.3 percent, which is 0.4 percentage point above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in March, the labor force declined, after twenty consecutive months of growth, by 32,709, or 0.7 percent, to end at 4,429,864, as the number of unemployed residents increased by 29,709. The number of employed residents decreased by 62,418 to end at 4,282,906. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which was higher at 4.4 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, decreased by 28,600 jobs in March to 4,071,300. February's preliminary estimates were revised downward 6,900. In March, private sector employment decreased by 27,600 jobs to 3,338,400, while public sector payrolls decreased by 1,000 jobs to 732,900.

(more)

Toll Free: 1 (866) 832-2363  
E-Mail: [customerservice@vec.virginia.gov](mailto:customerservice@vec.virginia.gov)

VRC/TDD VA Relay 711  
Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

From February 2020 to March 2020, **seasonally adjusted** employment increased in three major industry divisions and decreased in eight. The largest job gain during March occurred in **finance** with a gain of 800 jobs to 218,200. Other employment gains included **miscellaneous services** (+300 jobs) to 202,900 and **trade and transportation** (+100 jobs) to 662,100. The largest loss during March occurred in **leisure and hospitality** (-14,800 jobs) to 408,600. The second largest loss was **private education and health services** (-7,100 jobs) to 554,500. The third largest employment loss was **professional and business services** (-4,700 jobs) to 772,700. Other job losses occurred in: **government** (-1,000 jobs) to 732,900, **manufacturing** (-1,000 jobs) to 240,700, **information** (-700 jobs) to 67,800, **construction** (-400 jobs) to 203,200, and **mining**, (-100 jobs) to 7,700. For total government, gains occurred in federal government (+400 jobs) and state government (+100 jobs) while local government declined 1,500 jobs.

### Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			February 2020 to March 2020		March 2019 to March 2020	
	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>4,071,300</b>	<b>4,099,900</b>	<b>4,048,600</b>	<b>-28,600</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>	<b>22,700</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
<b>Total Private Sector</b>	<b>3,338,400</b>	<b>3,366,000</b>	<b>3,321,400</b>	<b>-27,600</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	<b>451,600</b>	<b>453,100</b>	<b>455,300</b>	<b>-1,500</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>	<b>-3,700</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>
Mining	7,700	7,800	8,000	-100	-1.3%	-300	-3.8%
Construction	203,200	203,600	202,900	-400	-0.2%	300	0.1%
Manufacturing	240,700	241,700	244,400	-1,000	-0.4%	-3,700	-1.5%
<b>Service-Providing</b>	<b>3,619,700</b>	<b>3,646,800</b>	<b>3,593,300</b>	<b>-27,100</b>	<b>-0.7%</b>	<b>26,400</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Private Service-Providing</b>	<b>2,886,800</b>	<b>2,912,900</b>	<b>2,866,100</b>	<b>-26,100</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>	<b>20,700</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	662,100	662,000	660,600	100	0.0%	1,500	0.2%
Information	67,800	68,500	67,900	-700	-1.0%	-100	-0.1%
Finance	218,200	217,400	210,900	800	0.4%	7,300	3.5%
Professional and Business Services	772,700	777,400	761,300	-4,700	-0.6%	11,400	1.5%
Education and Health Services	554,500	561,600	552,200	-7,100	-1.3%	2,300	0.4%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	408,600	423,400	411,400	-14,800	-3.5%	-2,800	-0.7%
Miscellaneous Services	202,900	202,600	201,800	300	0.1%	1,100	0.5%
<b>Government</b>	<b>732,900</b>	<b>733,900</b>	<b>727,200</b>	<b>-1,000</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
Federal Government	183,700	183,300	181,300	400	0.2%	2,400	1.3%
State Government	162,500	162,400	160,200	100	0.1%	2,300	1.4%
Local Government	386,700	388,200	385,700	-1,500	-0.4%	1,000	0.3%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From March 2019 to March 2020, BLS estimates that establishments in Virginia added 22,700 jobs, or 0.6 percent. Over-the-year employment growth in Virginia has been positive for 72 consecutive months. In March, the private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 17,000 jobs, while employment in the public sector added 5,700 jobs.

(more)

Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, seven of the eleven major industry divisions experienced employment gains, while four experienced employment losses. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **professional and business services**, up 11,400 jobs (+1.5 percent). The next largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **finance**, up 7,300 jobs (+3.5 percent). **Government** experienced the third largest over-the-year job gain of 5,700 jobs (+0.8 percent). Within government, there were increases in federal government employment (2,400 jobs), state government employment (2,300 jobs), and local government employment (1,000 jobs). Other gains were in: **private education and health services**, up 2,300 jobs (+0.4 percent); **trade and transportation**, up 1,500 jobs (+0.2 percent); **miscellaneous services**, up 1,100 jobs (+0.5 percent); and **construction**, up 300 jobs (+0.1 percent). Job losses occurred in: **manufacturing**, down 3,700 jobs (-1.5 percent); **leisure and hospitality**, down 2,800 jobs (-0.7 percent); **mining**, down 300 jobs (-3.8 percent); and **information**, down 100 jobs (-0.1 percent).

### Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			February 2020 to March 2020		March 2019 to March 2020	
	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	4,071,300	4,099,900	4,048,600	-28,600	-0.7%	22,700	0.6%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	76,900	78,100	78,500	-1,200	-1.5%	-1,600	-2.0%
Charlottesville MSA	123,100	122,900	120,500	200	0.2%	2,600	2.2%
Harrisonburg MSA	70,000	70,300	69,600	-300	-0.4%	400	0.6%
Lynchburg MSA	105,100	105,200	106,400	-100	-0.1%	-1,300	-1.2%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,519,700	1,535,000	1,507,600	-15,300	-1.0%	12,100	0.8%
Richmond MSA	691,700	697,200	684,900	-5,500	-0.8%	6,800	1.0%
Roanoke MSA	161,900	162,500	163,000	-600	-0.4%	-1,100	-0.7%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	51,200	52,100	51,600	-900	-1.7%	-400	-0.8%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	794,900	799,000	796,300	-4,100	-0.5%	-1,400	-0.2%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	64,900	66,700	65,500	-1,800	-2.7%	-600	-0.9%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

**Seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In March, one metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains, and nine experienced job loss. The only absolute job gain occurred in Charlottesville (+200 jobs). The largest absolute job loss occurred in Northern Virginia (-15,300 jobs). The second largest job loss occurred in Richmond (-5,500 jobs). The third largest job loss occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (-4,100 jobs). Other job losses were: Winchester (-1,800 jobs), Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-1,200 jobs), Staunton-Waynesboro (-900 jobs), Roanoke (-600 jobs), Harrisonburg (-300), and Lynchburg (-100 jobs).

Over the year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment increased in four of the ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job gain, up

(more)

12,100 jobs (+0.8 percent). Richmond ranked second, with a gain of 6,800 jobs (+1.0 percent). The other over-the-year job gains occurred in Charlottesville (+2,600 jobs), and Harrisonburg (+400 jobs). The largest job loss occurred in Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-1,600 jobs). The second largest job loss occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (-1,400 jobs). Other job losses occurred in: Lynchburg (-1,300 jobs), Roanoke (-1,100 jobs), Winchester (-600 jobs), and Staunton (-400 jobs).

## **NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA**

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate rose 0.5 percentage point in March to 3.3 percent, and was up 0.3 percentage point from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 15,046, household employment increased by 32,999, and the labor force increased by 48,045. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which increased 0.7 percentage point in March to 4.5 percent.

Compared to last month, the March **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 162,900 manufacturing production workers decreased by 0.2 hour to 39.4 hours, average hourly earnings increased \$0.18 to \$19.42, while average weekly earnings rose \$3.25 to \$765.15. Compared to last March, the unadjusted workweek decreased by 0.1 hour, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.26, and average weekly earnings were lower by \$12.21.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS.

**Note that the March survey reference periods for both surveys predated many coronavirus-related business and school closures that occurred in the second half of the month.**

*The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of March 8-14, 2020.*

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the March local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, April 29, 2020. The data will be available on our website, [www.VirginiaWorks.com](http://www.VirginiaWorks.com).

The April statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 22, 2020.